**Philosophy 240L – Philosophy in Translation: Latin**

**Justus Lipsius’s *De Constantia[[1]](#footnote-1)***

Spring 2022

Syllabus

Jeffrey K. McDonough

A group of people in a room

Description automatically generated

**Important Information:**

Meeting time: Default Tuesday 1:30-2:45, but we will try to find a time to accommodate all

participants

We will be meeting on-line this semester (for academic reasons):

<https://harvard.zoom.us/j/97733303062?pwd=YUgrVmJXVVZyUjRtajJQVk9OQVlkZz09>

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**Course Description:**

Described by Montaigne as one of the most learned men alive, Justus Lipsius was a Belgian philologist, humanist, and philosopher of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. His *De Contantia* proved to be a smash hit in his own time. Going through over 30 Latin editions, it served as the founding of the early modern movement known as *neo-stoicism*. This course will meet weekly to read passages in Latin from Lipsius’s *De Constantia*. It is open to undergraduates, graduates, and faculty of all reading levels. It can be audited with minimal commitment or taken as a course towards the satisfaction of the Philosophy Department’s language requirement. Please contact the instructor if you would like to be placed (with no commitment) on the course e-mail distribution list.

**Tentative Schedule**

Latin text links are to: Justi Lipsi *De Constantia Libri Duo*, available through Google Books, here:

[DE CONSTANTIA - LATIN TEXT](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Justi_Lipsi_De_Constantia_Libri_Duo/lNEGAAAAcAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PP7&printsec=frontcover)

*On Constancy* – English Translation, [Book I](http://www.wku.edu/~jan.garrett/lipsius1.htm), [Book II](http://www.wku.edu/~jan.garrett/lipsius2.htm)

Note: *De Constantia* went through many editions. For the sake of coordination, we will refer to the particular edition accessible via the link given just above. It is possible to download and print that edition through Google Books if you like. The linked English translation is by John Stradling (1594) retouched and annotated by Jan Garrett (1999).

**Reading #1: The Setting**

Broader context:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapters 1-3

Latin reading:

• Book I, Chapter 1, page 2, “Nam cum post meridiem … ubi nec Pelopidarum facta neque nomen audiam.”

• Book I, Chapter 2, page 6, “Animus enim certe est, qui aegrotat …quia non sequentur te adfectus tui, sed trahent [i.e. end of the chapter]”

• Book I, Chapter 3, page 10, “Mitte igitur, Lipsi, vana haec imo noxia …Haec enim vera morbi tui remedia: cetera omnia, panni & fomenta.”

**Reading #2: Constancy**

Broader context:

• Seneca, “On the Firmness of the Wise Man,” available [here](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/On_the_Firmness_of_the_Wise_Man). / Seneca, “*De constantia sapientis*,” available [here](https://la.wikisource.org/wiki/De_constantia_sapientis).

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 4

**Reading #3: Opinion versus Reason**

Broader context:

• Seneca, *Moral Letters to Lucilius*, “Letter 71,” available [here](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Moral_letters_to_Lucilius/Letter_71). / Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, “LXXI. Seneca Lucilio Suo Salutem,” available [here](https://la.wikisource.org/wiki/Epistulae_morales_ad_Lucilium/Liber_VIII#LXXI._SENECA_LUCILIO_SUO_SALUTEM).

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 5

**Reading #4: The Affects**

Broader context:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 7-12

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 7, page 22 (near bottom), “Duo sunt quae arcem hanc in nobis … consecretur publica haec Febris?”

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 11, page 37, “Amor enim hic in patriam, Pietas … quin Pietatem hanc oppugnem irrito telo.”

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 12, page 44, “Tertius Adfectus temperatus … & pro qua Miseratio tibi subrepit & imponit.”

**Reading #5: Public Evils – Providence**

Broader context:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 13-14

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Chapter 13

**Reading #6: Public Evils – Necessity**

Broader context:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 15-17

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 15, page 57, “Hanc [necessitas] Providentiae nunc adtexto … per magnum hoc Universum [end]”

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 16, page 59, “Omnia ista quae suspicis, quae miraris … Vidimusque (difficulter creditum) in caelo ipso nasci aliquid posse, & mori.”

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 16, page 61, “Quod si ad interitum mutationemque magna illa corpora … nos Athenarum, Spartae, & tot illustrium urbium ignobiles runias.”

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 17, page 67, “Homerum ecce adi & audi … quia vulgo confusion hic & error [end]”

**Reading #7: Four Kinds of Fate**

Broader context:

• Seneca, *De Providentia*/*On Providence*, available in Latin with facing English [here](http://www.crtpesaro.it/Materiali/Latino/On%20Providence.php).

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 18, from the beginning on page 68 to “Fatum alias

Providentiam ipsam appellabant, alias Deum” on page 73.

**Reading #8: True Destiny Expounded**

Broader context:

• Cicero, *De Fato*, in Latin [here](http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/fato.shtml), in English [here](https://www.informationphilosopher.com/solutions/philosophers/cicero/de_fato_english.html).

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 19, from the beginning on page 75 to “necessario omnia fieri quae Fato fiunt” on page 79.

**Reading #9: Distinguished from Stoic Destiny**

Broader context:

• Augustine, *City of God*, Book V, sections 8-11, in Latin [here](https://www.thelatinlibrary.com/augustine/civ5.shtml), in English [here](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45304/45304-h/45304-h.htm#Page_177).

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 20, from the beginning on page 80 to “à te & in te, quòd ad malum” (just before (“Denique ut concludam”) on page 84.

**Reading #10: The Refuge of Necessity**

Broader context:

•*The Fate of the Antientes*, extract from Lipsius’s *Physiologiae Stoicorum* 1.12, Latin text and English translation by Zanchius available [here](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/i4j33ymcztqdwvx/AAC1aS5eKPastZFJIyBSblNDa?dl=0).

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 21

**Reading #11: The Lazy Argument?**

Broader context:

• Michel de Montaigne, *Essays* 3.10, *Of Managing the Will*, available in English [here](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3600/3600-h/3600-h.htm#link2HCH0012).

• Blaise Pascal, Conversation of Pascal with M. De Saci on Epictetus and Montaigne, available in English [here](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Blaise_Pascal/Conversation_on_Epictetus_and_Montaigne).

Latin reading:

• *De Constantia*, Book I, Chapter 22, from the beginning on page 88 to “Quae nunc periit libertas, reviviscere potest: & patria que corruit, rsurgere labenti aevo” on page 91.

**Optional Texts and Background Reading:**

Cooper, J. M., 2004, ‘Justus Lipsius and the Revival of Stoicism in Late-Sixteenth-Century Europe’, in N. Brender and L. Krasnoff (eds.), *New Essays on the History of Autonomy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 7–29.

Papy, Jan, "Justus Lipsius", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*(Spring 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/justus-lipsius/>>.

Kraye, J. (2001–2002) “Stoicism in the Renaissance from Petrarch to Lipsius”, Grotiana, n.s. 22 (3): 3–27.

Kraye, J. (2007) “The Revival of Hellenistic Philosophies”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. J. Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 97–112.

Kraye, J. (2008) “From Medieval to Early Modern Stoicism”, in *Continuities and Disruptions between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.* Proceedings of the Colloquium held at the Warburg Institute, 15–16 July 2007, ed. C. Burnett, J. Meirinhos and J. Hamesse (Turnhout: Brepols): 1–23.

Papy, J. (2017) “Justus Lipsius and Neo-Stoicism,” in *The Routledge Companion to Sixteenth Century Philosophy*, eds. Henrik Lagerlund & Benjamin Hill (Abingdon: Routledge): 203–221.

Papy, J. (2004) “Lipsius’s (Neo-)Stoicism: Constancy between Christian Faith and Stoic Virtue,” in *Hugo Grotius and the Stoa*, ed. Hans W. Blom and Laurens C. Winkel (Assen: Van Gorcum) [= Grotiana, N.S. 22–23 (2001–2002)]: 47–71].

Levi, A.H.T., (2000) “The relationship of Stoicism and scepticism: Justus Lipsius,” in *Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. J. Kraye and M. Stone (London and New York: Routledge): 91–106.

Morford, M., (1991) *Stoics and Neostoics: Rubens and the Circle of Lipsius* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Saunders, J. L., (1955) *Justus Lipsius: The Philosophy of Renaissance Stoicism* (New York: The Liberal Arts Press).

Sellars, J., (2014) “Stoic Fate in Justus Lipsius’s De Constantia and Physiologia Stoicorum,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 52 (4): 653–674.

Sellars, J., (2016) *The Routledge Handbook of the Stoic Tradition* (Routledge).

Sellars, J., (2020) “Justus Lipsius (1547-1606)” James Fieser and Bradley Dowden, eds. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, URL = < <https://iep.utm.edu/lipsius/>>

1. The image is of *The Four Philosophers* (1611-12) by Peter Paul Rubens. From left to right, it depicts the painter, Peter Paul Rubens, his brother, Philip Rubens, Justus Lipsius, and Joannes Woverius, a Dutch official and former student of Lipsius. A bust of Seneca stands in the upper-right hand corner. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)